



# Retirement Planning Checklist

Whether you're planning to retire in a few months or a few years, you should start thinking about what you need to do to make your transition into retirement as smooth as possible. This checklist will guide you towards retirement by identifying the steps and documents needed to complete PERSI's retirement process.

## Throughout Your Career

- Review your PERSI Base Plan annual statements (sent each fall) for accuracy.
- Review your quarterly PERSI Choice Plan 401(k) statements for accuracy and to help with decisions about increasing your voluntary contributions or changing your investment mix.
- Evaluate your personal finances regularly including assets, liabilities, insurance, and investments.
- Attend one of PERSI's Retirement Education Workshops.

## Three Years Before Retirement

- Call PERSI to receive a Base Plan benefits estimate and to verify your service history.
- Contact the Social Security Administration (SSA) to verify work history and receive an estimate.
- Attend a PERSI Retirement Workshop.

## One to Two Years Before Retirement

- Call PERSI for an updated Base Plan benefits estimate and to learn about Choice Plan payment options in retirement.
- Contact SSA
  - » verify work history and request an estimate based on your retirement age and the date you will stop working (needed for PERSI Options 3, 4A, and 4B). You may need to go into the SSA office.
  - » find out how to apply for benefits and enroll in Medicare. (*You have 3 months before and 3 months after your 65<sup>th</sup> birthday to enroll in Medicare, otherwise you may face a penalty.*)
- Contact your tax-deferred annuity agents or financial planner to discuss other retirement income.
- Consult with a tax specialist about the tax consequences of various pension payments.

## Six Months Before Retirement

- Inform your employer of your targeted retirement date.
- If you are an employee of a state agency or an eligible school district or political subdivision, ask your payroll clerk about the cash value of your unused sick leave. Your employer will tell PERSI the amount.
- Ask your payroll clerk for a retiree health insurance enrollment form. State employees may obtain a retiree insurance request card from the Office of Insurance Management by calling 208-332-1863 or toll-free 1-800-531-0597. Request a comparison of insurance rates between Retiree Medical Insurance and COBRA, and find out if Medicare Part D (prescription coverage) will affect your insurance.
- Contact PERSI for an updated Base Plan benefits estimate and to request a retirement application.
- If age 62 or older, formally notify SSA of your retirement plans.
- If you have NCPERS Insurance, check with your employer about continuing this after retirement.
- If you have been divorced anytime while a PERSI member, your former spouse may be entitled to part of your PERSI benefit. To make that determination, PERSI will need a copy of your divorce decree and property settlement agreement.

## Two Months Before Retirement

- Make an appointment to meet with a PERSI Retirement Specialist. If you're married, bring your spouse. Although this meeting is not required, it is highly recommended.
- Select a retirement option; prepare your application package and complete all forms (RS322 form, direct deposit, and retiree insurance forms). Your signature and your spouse's must be notarized. Submit all forms to PERSI 45 days prior to your planned retirement date.
- Provide PERSI with an original voided check from your bank.
- Visit your local Social Security office with your spouse (if retiring at age 62 or over).
- Contact your payroll representative to finalize insurance arrangements, if any.

## One Month Before Retirement

- If eligible to use Unused Sick Leave to pay retiree medical insurance, remind your payroll clerk to advise PERSI of the cash value of your unused sick leave entitlement.
- School district employees; ask your payroll clerk for a retiree health insurance form.
- State employees: contact the Office of Insurance Management for an insurance benefits request form.

## Before Retirement Effective Date

- Make sure your employer notifies PERSI that you are terminating work. Your retirement cannot be finalized and may be delayed if we do not receive this notification.

## Retirement Application Forms

PERSI tries to make the retirement process as easy as possible. To finalize your retirement, several forms must be completed. Be sure to include your name and Social Security number on all forms and documents. Contact PERSI to receive the forms.

- Application for Retirement RS-121 - To select a retirement allowance and, if you wish, to name a Contingent Annuitant (CA) to receive a monthly allowance following your death. Signatures on this form must be notarized.
- Choice Plan 401(k) Distribution Kit - To select a payment option for your 401(k) funds. This kit is sent with your retirement packet from PERSI. It is also available by calling the Choice Plan toll-free at 1-866-437-3774 or by visiting the PERSI Web site at [www.persi.state.id.us/choice.htm](http://www.persi.state.id.us/choice.htm). If your balance exceeds \$200, you can leave it in the plan.
- Retiree Insurance Benefits Request - (For qualifying state and school employees only) To continue coverage in your group medical plan. State employees: contact the Office of Insurance Management at 208-332-1863 or 1-800-531-0597. School employees: contact your payroll/personnel office for the form.
- Tax Withholding Certificate RS-322 - To withhold state and federal income taxes from your monthly allowance.
- Direct Deposit Authorization RS-448 - To deposit your monthly checks directly into your financial institution.
- Beneficiary Designation RS-115 - If you recently had a life event change (marriage, divorce, death, etc.), you may wish to name a new beneficiary. You may want your beneficiary and Contingent Annuitant to be different people.
- Notification of Separation RS-109 - Your employer must submit prior to your requested retirement date.
- Optional forms: Split Sick Leave RS-160 and Durable Power of Attorney RS-113

## Documents PERSI Will Need

*Unless indicated otherwise, legible photocopies will suffice.*

- Birth Certificates: Yours and Contingent Annuitant's (required if you selected a CA).
- Social Security Cards: Yours and Contingent Annuitant's (required if you selected a CA).
- Social Security Benefit Estimate from SSA (required only if you are considering PERSI retirement options 3, 4A, or 4B).
- Voided Check from your financial institution: An original, voided check is required to have your monthly allowance deposited directly into your bank account.
- Divorce Decree (if applicable): A copy of your divorce decree and property settlement agreement.